

### PAUL CONTINUES FIGHT TO ARM PILOTS

Washington, DC: Congressman Ron Paul, who has led the fight on Capitol Hill to allow commercial pilots to arm themselves, today expressed optimism that armed pilots legislation could become law by the end of the year. The Bush administration recently softened its opposition to guns in the cockpit, and the Senate overwhelmingly passed an armed pilots measure this week.

Paul was the first Congressman to introduce armed pilots legislation following the September 11th terrorist attacks, proposing that airlines themselves be allowed to implement self-defense programs without interference from the federal government. Paul worked closely with several 2nd amendment groups to ensure that armed pilots legislation remained a priority with House leadership. He also has been an outspoken critic of Transportation department officials who oppose guns in the cockpit.

"Transportation bureaucrats, especially anti-gun Secretary Mineta, forget that Congress makes the laws," Paul stated, referring to an earlier assertion by one official that the department would never allow guns in the cockpit. "Fortunately, public support for armed pilots has been overwhelming. Congress and the public must continue to pressure Mr. Mineta until every pilot has his or her full Second amendment rights restored."

"We must allow our professional pilots to carry firearms as a last line of defense against future terrorist hijackings," Paul concluded. "Common sense dictates that the pilots who operate today's incredibly complex aircraft have the ability to handle simple handguns. The flying public deserves to know pilots can defend the cockpit from terrorists."